



The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 16 No. 4

Find us on the web at <http://www.araassociation.com>

April-June, 2024

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“Aerial Rocket Artillery”

....when called on by those who were in danger, our units were there laying it on the line. We were proud of our Aerial Rocket Artillery Team then and still proud of it now.

The Straphanger Gazette is a quarterly publication of the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association. Issues will be published on or about the 1st of January, April, July and October. Members who have e-mail will receive a copy as an pdf attachment

COME CRUISE WITH US AND HAVE A WONDERFUL TIME AND NO REGRETS



President's Corner

In a few months we will be honoring the people who made the highest sacrifices to protect and defend our nations and rights and privileges with have today. Please take time on Memorial Day to honor those men and women that gave their lives so we may continue to enjoy our freedoms.

Also take time to reach out to veterans or ARA Army buddy even if you haven't talked in a while. If they need help, refer them to VA or their American Legion; please tell them about the upcoming cruise, if they are part of the ARA.

Speaking of plans; we have a great ARA 2024 cruise reunion coming up September 7-12th , 2024, out of Galveston, Texas, cruising for a day at sea, ports of call at Puerto Costa Maya and Cozumel, Mexico for excursions, another day of cruising at and returning to Galveston, Texas.

Remember how some of you guys got to Vietnam on ship? You could say we are recreating that adventure; but with better accommodations, food and entertainment. The *Mariner of the Seas* has theaters/shows, casino, shopping, pools, whirlpools, live bands, room service, pickleball, library, cinema, bars and many more activities and shore excursions at the ports of call. You can either stay on the ship and do activities on board and/or take a shore excursion.

At ARA 2023 St Louis reunion last year we noted members were getting up in years and some had diminished mobility which created a challenge getting about, therefore a cruise was selected as our next ARA reunion in 2024. You can rent an electric scooter that will be delivered to the ship, used on the ship and picked back up from the ship by the company.

It is always so good to renew old friendships and share some of those great stories. It just takes making the reservation and a small deposit. I hope to see you on board the cruise. If there are any questions, feel free to contact me, Cecil Henegveld, Jesse Hobby, James Fleming or AAA group Trip coordinator.

Please sign up soon as possible so we can have as many members attending this year's reunion as possible. See additional details in this current newsletter issue. I hope you will make plans to attend our ARA 2024 Reunion.

Jule Szabo

ARA Six

DON'T LET ME BE A VOICE, CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS

On behalf of the Board of the ARA, I take keyboard in hand to write to the membership to make as appealing a case as I can for people to decide to support their association, decide it is the time to determine that they will avail themselves of the opportunity to see their old friends from the days of our arrested, foolish but daring, youth at least one more time before it is too late.

My goal is not to hang crepe or evoke dread visions of the Grim Reaper lurking at our door, but to lay before those who proudly served when called on and were a part of the most unique military unit (not to mention one of the most successful) to ever be a part of our valiant Army, some stark historical and current facts that should give us the incentive to set aside the time and resources to **be a part of the ARA 25th Reunion Cruise September 7-12, 2024 aboard the Royal Caribbean *Mariner of the Seas***. FYI, everything you might need to know is on the pages following this message.

First, some back stories.

The Association had held 20 successful, well attended and received, reunions, hosted by our own people at various sites all over the USA. A fun-filled gathering was planned for 2020, in Savannah, GA, when suddenly the world was shut down by the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the reunion became another of its victims. The same valiant and industrious people tried to reset it at the same site in 2021 only to be deterred by governmental restrictions and threats of impending doom. This viral malady caught the government and the private sector completely by surprise. It claimed millions of lives world-wide, exhausted the health service industry and its care providers, did irreparable damage to our educational system. Fortunately, powers far beyond the realm of mere men/women, and the resilience of the human body prevailed and the worst was passed by 2023.

In 2022, at the reunion in Fairfax, VA and the national Museum of the Army, we began to notice that, like our school system, we were not bouncing back and (a) attendance was down and (b) Covid was still a threat to a few, but in a larger sense, our population was growing older, more debilitated with chronic problems many of which can be traced to our Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam. These factors were present again in St. Louis in 2023, only more so. It became clear that we were down to "the faithful few" who could always be counted on to make the reunions. Therefore, a consensus and questionnaire were undertaken and the decision was made to shift away from motel/hotel based reunions in varying locations with attempts to provide sightseeing attractions to a cruise venue where the cruise line provided entertainment, food, available experiences in ports-of-call and each person could determine what level of activity fit them. The cost of these cruises, when all factors are considered, is equal to the previous venues or less.

With that said, here are some significant realities. Time waits for no one. We as a group are aging and age is taking its toll. Many of us have embarked on our last mission to a place from which there is no return. We have by no means published all the death notices, (only those we have been made aware of). In addition, some have moved and/or changed their email addresses and been lost to contact, especially if they have lost interest in the Association. The median age for a Vietnam era veteran is 68 (with a range of 55-97 years). The natural effects of aging, compounded by the residual effects of toxic substance exposure created a potential barrier to gathering for reunions, although many with debilitating conditions still do so. When one combines all these factors, the unsavory question arises, "How many more reunions will you be able to attend"? Will the interest wane sufficiently to make it financially impractical to attempt such a gathering?

I personally have thought how I wish I could have seen someone I had good and bad times with but they are gone now, or they do not attend the ones we have available. There are even a few who may not have ever bothered to join our ranks but may be a phone call or email away. I will close with the words of the American Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier.

*“The saddest words of tongue or pen
Are these: it might have been.”*

Asa (Doc) Talbot
Editor and Chaplain

Final Note: Wheelchairs and battery-powered scooters are a common sight on cruise ships. All public transportation are required to carry these without charge for the debilitated. Jean has rented one on past cruises, and now owns her own personal one, which we will have on board. They are a real boon for the cruise and can even be used on most shore excursions. Ours is a very light, easily carried one which costs about \$3,000 and will go about 14 miles on a charge. Recharging and storage are usually a snap on the ship.. Doc

2024 REUNION CRUISE

September 7 – 12, 2024 // Departing Galveston, TX

During our annual 2023 reunion in St. Louis, our members decided to take us where we've never been before – the high seas! Join your fellow ARA members as we set sail on Royal Caribbean's Mariner of the Seas on a 5-night cruise through the Western Caribbean.

Your cruise committee – AKA your cruise directors, Jesse Hobby, Cecil Hengeveld, and James Flemming – are hard at work to make this cruise our most memorable reunion yet! We also have the services of a dedicated cruise planner through AAA. *Read on to learn more and begin planning your travel!*

PLEASE NOTE – THIS DOCUMENT REFERENCES “LINKS” TO INTERNET PAGES. YOU MAY READ THIS DOCUMENT ON OUR WEBSITE ARAASSOCIATION.COM AND CLICK ON 2024 REUNION, FROM THERE YOU CAN SEE THE PAGES THAT ARE REFERENCED.

Dates: September 7 – 12, 2024

Cruise Line: Royal Caribbean

Ship: Mariner of the Seas

Mariner of the Seas Cruise Itinerary:

Day 1 - Depart Galveston at 4:00 PM CST

Day 2 - Cruising Day at sea

Day 3 - Puerto Costa Maya, Mexico

Day 4 - Cozumel, Mexico

Day 5 - Cruising Day at sea

Day 6 - Arrive Galveston, TX (Morning of)

Read on to learn more about costs, how to book, travel to Galveston, and required documentation for cruising!

TRAVEL TO GALVESTON:

ARRIVING BY AIR:

It is recommended you and your party arrive on September 6, 2024 OR in the early morning hours of September 7, 2024. Galveston is south of Houston and there are major airports to fly into.

- **William P. Hobby Airport (HOU)** is SOUTH of Houston and is the closest airport to Galveston. It is serviced by Allegiant, American, Delta, Frontier, and Southwest Airlines (*a major hub for Southwest*).
- **George Bush Intercontinental International Airport (IAH)** is NORTH of Houston and will require more travel time to Galveston.
- Terminal A is the smallest and least crowded terminal for arrivals and departures. *It is serviced by Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, Delta, Frontier, Jet Blue, Southwest, Spirit, and WestJet.*
- All other terminals are serviced by *United Airlines or are international.*

DRIVING:

Houston and Galveston are easily accessible by car. Please note – much of Houston is serviced by toll-roads. If you are arriving by car, please contact Jesse Hobby for tips on driving - including how to register your car's tag (license plate) to use the toll roads in Texas.

There is parking at the Port of Galveston and you can reserve parking there – [click here to learn more.](#)

AAA CRUISE PLANNER / TRAVEL COUNSELOR:

To make this a seamless and easy booking experience, the board has added the services of a dedicated AAA Cruise AND Travel Planner, that you may contact directly to help you with all of your travel plans – including air and hotel in the Houston/Galveston area. (Costs are outlined below as well)

Ms. Hasmita Babulal, Travel Counselor, The Auto Club Group (AAA)

hbabulal@acg.aaa.com

407-638-2041 or 407-444-4240

(Please note, AAA membership is not required)

2024 REUNION CRUISE COST / STATEROOM RATES**:

Interior Stateroom: \$1005.84

Oceanview Stateroom: \$1273.84

Balcony Stateroom: \$1587.84

The rates for these categories are for two (2) passengers per stateroom, prices are subject to change, and number of rooms of each type is subject to availability.

A \$100.00 per person (non-refundable) deposit is required, remainder may be paid in full or installments with PIF due no later than 5:00 PM June 9, 2024. At least eight (8) reservations are required to get group rates. There is also a \$90.00 gratuity payment per person due upon booking or as part of installment payment (s) or will be added as final payment prior to leaving ship.

*** These are group rates and are refundable. Please contact Hasmita if you have questions about refunds.*

IMPORTANT: *If you would like a suite or other cabin that is not listed here, Hasmita will help you get the best rate possible. We have not negotiated any rates beyond our stateroom categories. This would NOT be a part of our group rates.*

BEVERAGE PACKAGES/EXCURSIONS/ENTERTAINMENT & MORE:

After booking you should establish a Royal Caribbean account directly on Royal Caribbean.com

From there, you can then obtain information for Beverage Packages, Excursions, Dining, Entertainment, Spa, etc.

REQUIRED TRAVEL IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS:

Directly from Royal Caribbean's Travel Document Page:

In order to sail, you and your guest (s) must meet the requirements of

ONLY ONE from the list below

AND

**All documents must be original – no photocopies.
Your name must match across ALL documents.**

- U.S. Passport Book **OR** U.S. Passport Card

Royal Caribbean strongly recommends that all guests travel with a valid passport. [Learn why a passport is best.](#)
Passports must be valid at least 6 months after your cruise ends.

[Read more about passport requirements.](#)

- U.S. Birth Certificate **AND** Valid Government Issued ID (State ID Card, Driver's License **OR** Military ID)

- Original U.S. State Certified Birth Certificate or a certified copy; or an original Consular Birth Abroad Certificate from the U.S. State Department.

- [Read more about birth certificate requirements.](#)

- Guests **age 15 and under** are NOT required to have a photo ID, just the birth certificate.

Permanent Resident Card (Alien Resident Card "ARC" OR Green Card) **AND Valid Passport from Country of Citizenship**

- Guests must bring their physical Permanent Resident Card and it must be original – no photocopies.
- **Passports must be valid at least 6 months after your cruise ends.**
- [Read more about passport requirements.](#)
- Guests **age 16 and older** whose ARC has no photo must present a valid government issued photo ID
- Barbados & Martinique require ARC guests to provide a valid passport.
- **Any additional requirements are the responsibility of the guest.**
- **U.S. Naturalization Certificate **AND** Valid Government Issued ID (State ID Card, Driver's License OR Military ID)**
- Original U.S. Naturalization Certificate or a certified copy.
- Guests must bring their physical Permanent Resident Card and it must be original – no photocopies.
- **Enhanced Driver's License (EDL) that is not expired**
- Enhanced Driver's Licenses are only available from the following states: Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Vermont and Washington State.
- **An Enhanced Driver's License is different from a REAL ID (compliant ID). An EDL will have a flag on the front.**

ANCHORS AWAY! SEE YOU IN GALVESTON

Ms. Hasmita Babulal, Travel Counselor, The Auto Club Group (AAA) hbabulal@acg.aaa.com 407-638-2041 or 407-444-4240 is our travel planner and is extremely helpful and knowledgeable. I recommend utilizing her for whatever needs you may have. You may also contact any member of the Cruise Committee or the Board for questions or clarification.

This reunion will be a consistent subject in future issues of the Straphanger.

Reminder to everyone planning to join our Reunion 2024 Cruise. You need to sign up ASAP in order to get your stateroom of choice. You are required to make a \$100.00 deposit to secure your place on board. Final payment is due NLT 09 June 2024 , 5:00 PM EST. This is also the final date to cancel and get full refund.

If you are already booked and have a reservation number you will need to establish an account with Royal Caribbean as Crown & Anchor Society member.

After your account is established, you may go to the web site and either sign in when prompted or go to Manage My Cruise and sign in there when prompted. At this time, you can browse and purchase excursions, beverage packages, on board offerings, etc.

Recommend that you sign in weekly as they do run specials. These are discounts on excursions, beverage packages, etc. For example, one of the most recent was first beverage package reduced by 25% and then 50% off second package. This entitles you to all beverages for five (5) days.

As of March 13, 2024 we are 178 days from sailing.

Regards ,

Jesse Hobby

The Greatest Veterans Speech

By Paul Mason Carpenter

We celebrate the Americans who have served our nation in the military uniform. We honor those who are with us today. We remember and honor those who have passed. While there have been many great speeches made about veterans, there is one that stands above the rest. An Illinoisan gave it on 19 November 1863. It was given by the President of the United States – Abraham Lincoln. These are President Lincoln’s words.

“Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure”.

Idealism.

Lincoln declared that our nation was established with the signing of the Declaration of Independence four score and seven years ago – not with the Constitution. The Declaration of Independence is a very righteous and idealistic document. Among many other thoughts, it proclaims, “All men are created equal.” On the other hand, the Constitution is a concrete and practical document. While it guides us, protects us, and frames our government, it is a compromise of many issues. It is not idealistic like the Declaration of Independence; for example, the Constitution never states that all men are created equal. So, by tying the establishment of our nation to the Declaration of Independence, Lincoln emphasizes our idealism, our high aspirations for a democratic government, our high moral ground. He invokes patriotism, the preeminent role of the people in our government, and the equality of men. He sets the tone for future service. Lincoln’s emphasis on the prominence of the moral high ground in being an American continues today. The moral high ground continues today as a prime reason for Americans to go to war. The moral high ground guides us in battle. The moral high ground is intrinsic to being a veteran.

Lincoln also reminds us that as the world’s oldest standing democracy, we were still testing whether a government of the people could continue to stand. Democracy was not the global norm. It was an idealistic aberration that many suspected would fail.

Lincoln continues:

“We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate – we cannot hallow - this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.”

Reverence for Service.

Gettysburg with its 50,000 casualties was a terrible 3-day battle and a turning point of the Civil War. Although the war would continue for two more years, the Confederacy would never again challenge the Union.

As you are too aware, the soldier is a manager of violence. It is the one profession where a person is expected to die if needed. Lincoln recognized the soldier’s ultimate sacrifice – a sacrifice of life. Lincoln understood, emphasized and reemphasized the veteran’s sacrifice in keeping our nation alive. Veterans were the reason for the entire Gettysburg memorial event – to dedicate a veteran’s cemetery. And while Lincoln denigrates his own speech, he charged that we must never forget what our fighting men did in this terrible combat. Lincoln underscores the significance of the veterans and their actions in the battle. Lincoln states the soldier’s actions were of such nobility that the battlefield itself was made holy. It was made so holy that no one who was not a part of the battle could do anything of consequence to alter its sanctity, and do not. It is not just the dead who made the ground holy, it was all the men – living and dead – who fought there. I offer it was just Gettysburg; it was not just our Civil War, but our veteran in all our wars, that consecrated the grounds where many of our battles were fought. The ground was consecrated at St. Mihiel; it was consecrated on the sands of Iwo Jima; it was consecrated on the frozen retreat for Chosin Reservoir; it was consecrated in the jungles at Khe San; it was consecrated in the deserts of Kuwait and Iraq; it was consecrated at the World Trade Center; it was consecrated in the battlespace of Afghanistan.

Lincoln continues

“It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work, which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion. That we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain. That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Our Patriotic Charge

Lincoln praises the veterans and the veteran's noble efforts to keep our democratic nation together. He noted at the time, the war was not yet won. Lincoln then contended it is the responsibility of all Americans – soldiers and civilians – to continue the work of those who fought at Gettysburg. As Lincoln charged Americans to continue to fight the threats to democracy and freedom, we must do the same today. As Lincoln knew, our democracy must continually be nurtured and matured. Our founding fathers built an incredible government, but one that must be supported, protected, and evolved. Many very learned men did not believe that our government could endure. Many touted our Civil War as an example of the frailty of democratic government and that dissolution of the United States was inevitable. But Americans have persevered and instead of our democracy weakening, we have become stronger. In evidence, by our example, the number of democratic nations has surged around the world during our lifetimes. So, in the spirit of Abraham Lincoln and his charge, make us a better nation – do something albeit large or small. As veterans we have continued an unfinished work.

In Closing

This is the greatest veteran's speech ever given. It is living, it is altruistic, and a memorial for those who have passed defending our country. But Lincoln also emphasized a charge. It is a charge for us, the living, to continue to make our nation strong. Lincoln made three very salient points – idealism, reverence for service, and our patriotic charge. As American fighting men and women, we do not take an oath to a leader, or a nation, or a religion. We take our oath to the Constitution of the United States and all the rights, obligations, and ideals it upholds. This is unique to America. No other nation I know takes an oath to a constitution. As Lincoln emphasized, our nation's government was built by the people, for all the people, and would not fail. That is why we served. That is why we fought. That is why many veterans died. That is why we continue to serve. I applaud you for your character, your high ideals your dedication, your principles. I applaud you for your selflessness, your service to a greater cause than yourself. I applaud you for your willingness to sacrifice your health and even your life for America. God bless all of you who donned the uniform and served. And in turn, God bless all of you who have supported our men and women in uniform. Each and every one of you is truly a hero of our nation.

Note: This article was featured in the Fall 2023 issue of the "Daedalus Flyer."

Submitted by:

Jesse L. Hobby

Armed Falcon 29 Fox 1

NAPOLEON'S FLUFFIEST FOE

History is written by the victors, which is how Napoleon Bonaparte managed to be such a noble of the people, right up until his defeat at Waterloo, at which point he became a short, angry warmonger. Still he fought more than 60 battles and lost only eight times, which is an impressive record. If only one of those defeats had been against a herd of bunnies!

Pleased with himself at having won the War of the Fourth Coalition against most of Europe, Napoleon decided to celebrate by taking his favorite generals on a "wabbit" hunt. Thousands of bunnies were brought to a field in cages. Presumably the hunters expected the rabbits to take one look at their assembled might and run for the hills. What in fact happened was that the rabbits thought, "*Excellent, some humans who most likely have cabbage, I imagine*" while hopping happily toward them.

The rabbits swarmed the coaches, overpowering the coachmen with fluffiness. Napoleon jumped into his coach and beat a hasty retreat. Fresh from the defeat of the combined armies of Britain, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, Saxony and Sicily, the emperor of France had finally been defeated.

Ruthlessly torn from the pages of the Reader's Digest, September, 2023

I GOT CONFUSED WITH ALCOHOLICS
ANNONYMOUS AND THE AUTOMOBILE
ASSOCIATION WHEN I TRIED TO JOIN
RECENTLY. EITHER WAY I AM ON THE
ROAD TO RECOVERY

MY WIFE SAID I HAVE TWO
MAJOR FAULTS. I DON'T LISTEN
.....AND SOMETHING ELSE

MORE OF THE WIT AND WISDOM OF LARRY MOBLEY

Being a little older, I am very fortunate to have someone call and check on me every day. He is from India and is very concerned about my car warranty.

I choked on a carrot this morning, and all I could think of was, "I'll bet a doughnut wouldn't have done this to me."

Nothing spoils a good story more than the arrival of an eyewitness. (*Mark Twain*)

I finally realize why I look so bad in pictures. It's my face.

It only takes one slow-walking person in the grocery store to destroy the illusion that I'm a nice person.

Sorry that I'm late. I got here as soon as I wanted to.

It turns out that when asked who is your favorite child, you are supposed to pick out one of your own. I know that now.

It's fine to eat a test grape in the produce section, but you take one bite of rotisserie chicken and it's all, "Sir, you need to leave!"

One thing no one ever talks about, when it comes to being an older adult, is how much time we devote to keeping a cardboard box because it is, you know, a really good box.

I cannot believe I forgot to go to the gym today. That's seven years in a row, now.

If you dropped something when you were younger, you just picked it up. When you're older and you drop something, you stare at it for just a bit, contemplating if you actually need it any longer.

I like to make lists. I also like to leave them laying on the kitchen counter, and then guess what's on the list when I am at the store.

A giraffe's coffee would be cold by the time it reached the bottom of its throat. Ever think about that? No, you only think about yourself.

My kids say they want a cat for Christmas. Normally, I serve turkey -- but, hey, if it will make them happy . . .

Ask your doctor if a drug with 32 pages of side-effects is bad for you.

I relabeled all of the jars in my wife's spice rack. I'm not in trouble yet, but the thyme is cumin.

I just read a book about marriage that says treat your wife like you treated her on your first date. So, tonight after dinner, I'm dropping her off at her parent's house.

The best way to get back on your feet is to miss two car payments.

I love bacon. Sometimes I eat it twice a day. It takes my mind off the terrible chest pains I keep getting.

As I watch this generation try to rewrite history, one thing I am sure of is that it will be misspelled and have no punctuation.

Driver: "What am I supposed to do with this speeding ticket?" Officer: "Keep it. When you collect four of them, you get a bicycle."

I asked a supermarket employee where they kept the canned peaches. He said, "I'll see," and walked away. I asked another and he also said, "I'll see," and walked away. In the end, I gave up and found them myself, in Aisle C.

I told my physical therapist that I broke my arm in two places. He told me to stop going to those places.

I put our scale in the bathroom corner and that's where the little liar will stay until it apologizes.

When I was a kid, I used to watch the "Wizard of Oz" and wonder how someone could talk if they didn't have a brain. Then I joined Facebook.

Do you ever get up in the morning, look in the mirror and think, "That can't be accurate!"

I want to be 14 again and ruin my life differently. I have lots of new ideas.

Apparently RSVP'ing to a wedding invitation with "Maybe next time" isn't the correct response.

I just burned 1,200 calories: I forgot the pizza slices in the oven.

Who knew that the hardest thing of being an adult is figuring out what to fix for dinner and doing it every single night for the rest of your life until you die?

I hate it when people act all intellectual and talk about Mozart, when they've never even seen one of his paintings.

Never trust an electrician who has no eyebrows.

My neighbor knocked on my front door at 3am. 3AM! Luckily, I was already up, playing my bagpipes.

Instead of cleaning my house, I just watch an episode of "The Hoarders," and think, "Wow! My house looks great."



Chaplain's Corner

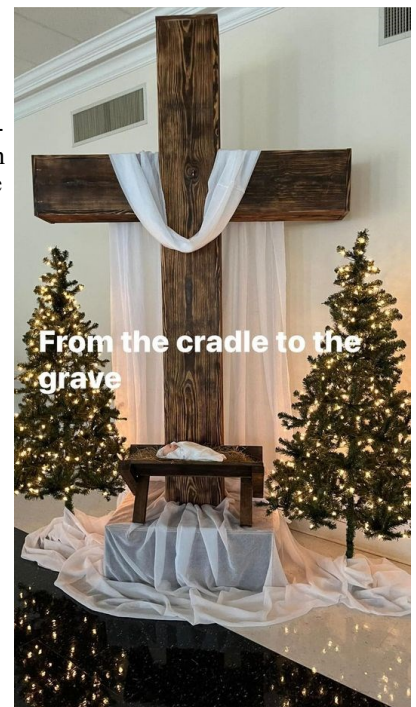
IF WINTER COMES, CAN SPRING BE FAR BEHIND—Percy Bysshe Shelley

Ah, Puxatawney Pete, the prophetic groundhog, has declared an early and warm spring, the Crocuses are dancing gaily in the breeze, the Hyacinths, Magnolias are bursting forth in bloom (at least here in the Shenandoah Valley) and only the most cynical of us are expecting a sudden freeze to ruin it all.

However, we must accept that the fact that the weather is determined by a power higher than mortal man, that over the years of weather forecasting, we have accumulated data piling beyond the clouds, instrumentation that boggles the imagination, armies of highly trained weathermen and women, thrust into our living rooms on a daily (even hourly) basis who still have their fingers crossed behind their backs as they assure us what the skies will bring. On the same broadcast we hear of tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunamis and drenching rains which turn the nations into unforeseen quagmires. These same pundits cannot come up with solid proof of climate change and the oft-predicted end-of-the-world. Weather prognostication has not improved since Noah tried to tell the people to get their act together, it was going to rain like crazy. Of course, they were having too much fun and it had never rained before. We have a saying in our neck of the woods, "If you don't like the weather, wait ten minutes and it will change".

The problem lies in the fact that people forget what the Supreme Field Manual says about the one who truly determines the weather: "His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts". Granted we self-certain selves can look at the sky and tell what is right before us, but as far as long-term prophesy we are really just sticking our finger out the window to guess the weather.

On a more positive note, everything was green for St. Patrick's Day and it seems will be Easter Sunday, although the Sunrise Services may turn out to be for the brave and heavily clad. The illustration below tells us the most important element of the Spring. Into a fallen world God expressed His infinite love in sending His Son to be born into human flesh in a humble stable, still being a part of the Godhead, yet continuing to grow, live and surrender His glory to the task of returning mankind to an acceptable relationship with a loving yet just God. From the beginning in the Garden it had been known that the only propitiation for sin was a blood sacrifice of a creature without blemish (substitute *sin*). For centuries people had substituted innocent but imperfect animals sprinkled with a mixture of ashes, hyssop and blood. However this was expedient but inadequate. It was necessary for the perfect sinless Savior to lay down His own life (as Abraham foretold on Mt. Moriah, "God would provide" the sacrifice). Once He had selected those who carry the Good News of the salvation He would purchase for the world and taught them and the public what they must know of the Kingdom of Heaven, He surrendered Himself to a hideous death on the cross as the sacrificial Lamb of God, slain for the sins of the world. He was reviled, spit upon, scourged and crucified, yielding up His earthly life and being buried in a borrowed tomb. From there He visited the lost in their place and offered them the same salvation. Then, He rose from the dead, reassured his followers and returned, in His divine and eternal state to prepare a place for us. And He will come again to take us home with Him.



GLORY HALLELUJAH, WHAT A SAVIOR.

Have a blessed Easter!!

Asa (Doc) Talbot

Chaplain and Editor

THE REAL CHRISTMAS STORY

Without the end
the tomb is empty
HE IS RISEN!

Ladies of the Association

Our local newspaper (published weekly), also known as the “Mullet Wrapper,” includes a column by a local humorist named Len Robbins. I have shared some of his witty work from time to time and am including his latest for you reading pleasure. What follows is probably something we learned as we moved from childhood to adulthood, and might have perhaps passed on to our children and grandchildren. If we didn’t, we should have.

Why you should avoid being an adult!

I now have a son who is a senior in college and another son who is a freshman. If that isn’t scary enough, financially and otherwise, the senior seems to think he’s ready for the “real world.”

“I can’t wait to graduate,” he said recently.

I quickly tried to talk some sense into him.

“Being an adult stinks,” I said. “Stay in schools as long as you can. Or as long as your parents will pay for most of it.”

While you’re still in the arms of education and not fully on your own, all you see is the glory of independence, and not the distasteful responsibilities that accompany adulthood. There are so many things “they” don’t tell us when we dive blindly out of adolescence on our own.

“What do you mean?” was his question.

Now being “they,” I told him what I meant. Here’s the condensed version.

Insurance – Many times during my education, it was mentioned that I would have to pay for insurance, but no one really stressed how much I would have to pay for insurance. They also failed to sufficiently convey how many types of insurance I would have to pay for, or that the percentage that insurance devours of my income would increase every minute of every day for the rest of my life.

Politics - You understand politics. Let me rephrase that: you may understand politics. When you’re young, politics is naively seen as a synonym for public service. You see someone running for a national political office and say, “Gee, he or she seems like a nice person. I’m glad they want to serve the people. I hope they win.” But as you wise up with age, you realize that it’s not about public service in the higher levels – it’s about politics. And politics is about money, special interests, and separating people by party alliances. These people who think they are in different political parties really aren’t that different, but politics wants them to believe that. And has been incredibly successful in doing so. We just need to rid our country of these political parties that separate us. But that’s unlikely to happen anytime soon – which is great for the business of politics, and horrible for public service.

Health – Before the metabolism halt of adulthood, I could eat four pounds of Rolos at breakfast, lunch and dinner and not gain an ounce. If I did that now I would myself become a Rolo (which is, by the way, a round candy that doesn’t breath). For most adults, your health becomes a major concern as you get older. And you have to be concerned with your kids’ health, your pet’s health, and then your parents’ health and well-being. And perhaps others.

Money – When you’re young, you think having lots of money will solve any problem and make you happy. Unfortunately, most of us never get to find out if that is true. It seems like everything costs a lot more than you can afford, no matter how much money you accumulate. Don’t get me wrong – I’m very, very thankful for everything we have. I have all the money I’ll ever need – if I died eight years ago. Even when you have money, your financial welfare is a concern that doesn’t seem to go away.

“What doesn’t stink about being an adult?” he asked.

“Well, lots of things,” I said. “First, you’re not a dog. For every year you age as an adult, a dog ages seven years. So, you have that going for you.”

Submitted by:

Gloria Hobby

MY CLOTHES ARE SO
WRINKLY PEOPLE HAVE
STARTED THINKING THAT I
AM IRON DEFICIENT

I DON’T WANT TO BRAG, BUT I AM
THE FIRST PERSON TO MAKE A
BOOK OUT OF ONION SKINS.
READ IT AND WEEP

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Whenever I see a broken elevator, I
tend to stare

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ORDER FORM FOR APPAREL, CAPS, PATCHES, STICK-ONS

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Address: _____

CAPS, Men's, come in one size (has adjustable headband) and will have the ARA Logo embroidered on the front and can have your name on the right side and call sign on the left side, if desired. Cost will be \$10.00

Print name as you want it to appear: _____

Print call sign as you want it to appear: _____

CAPS, Women's, come in one size and in two (2) styles – Short brim and low profile or as a Headband (both have adjustable headband) and will have the ARA Logo embroidered on the front and can have your name on the right side, if desired. If you would like to give yourself a call sign such as DRAGON LADY, LADY TORO, GRIFFIN MISTRESS, BLUE MAX MISTRESS, FALCONESS that can be put on the left sign. Cost will be \$10.00

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Print call sign as you want it to appear: _____

Shirts for men and women are available in sizes Small, Medium, Large, 2XL, 3XL, 4XL, and 5XL and will have the ARA Logo embroidered on the left side.

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ordered

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Specify Unit

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ARA ASSOCIATION

c/o Jesse Hobby

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Cairo, GA 39828

"Note from the Quartermaster - Apparel orders are taking longer to fill due to the supply chain crisis. Please be patient."



AERIAL ROCKET ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

Membership Application/Renewal Form

This form may be used for Applying for New Membership or for Renewing Existing Membership. Please circle that which is appropriate.

Name _____ Wife's Name _____

Rank _____ Membership Number _____

(At time of service in ARA)

(If known)

Retired Rank (if applicable) _____ Service Number _____

List all ARA Units that you served in. _____

<u>Battery/Battalion</u>	<u>Dates of Service</u>	<u>Call Sign</u>
_____	From mo./yr. to mo./yr.	_____
_____	From mo./yr. to mo./yr.	_____

Current Address: _____

Street or PO Box

_____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: _____

Home

Work (if okay)

Cell

E-Mail Address: _____

Association membership is on an annual basis (unless member opts for life membership) running from January 1 to December 31 and is past due on January 31.

Annual dues are **\$25.00** regardless of when submitting.

Life membership (if paid in full) is **\$250.00**. Life membership may also be paid in **\$50.00** installments on a quarterly basis until paid in full.

Total amount enclosed _____ (Please indicate in remarks section of check whether this is Initial Membership, Membership Renewal, Life Membership in full, Life Membership payment #.

Mail completed application to: Aerial Rocket Artillery Association

C/O Jesse Hobby

For Office Use Only _____ 145 Oakdale Rd.

Cairo, GA 39828

Check # _____

Check Date _____